

Message Text

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46

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DPW-01 IO-10 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /070 W

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R 200928Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2584

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 1193

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, EAID, LA

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH PRIME MINISTER ON SHOOTING DOWN OF
HELICOPTER

REF: A) STATE 032753

B) VIENTIANE 0505

1. AFTER DISCUSSING THE DEAN/SHARMAN CASE (SEPTTEL) WITH THE PRIME MINISTER TODAY, I TURNED TO THE QUESTION OF THE PATHET LAO ATTITUDE TOWARD THE U.S. ALTHOUGH PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG AND FONMIN PHOUMI HAD BOTH REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED THEIR DESIRE FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH US, THE DEAN CASE AND THE SHOOTING DOWN OF OUR HELICOPTER ON 18 JANUARY WERE REAL PROBLEMS. I REMINDED SOUVANNA THAT I HAD FORMALLY PROTESTED THIS INCIDENT WHICH HAD BEEN CAUSED BY QTE PERSONS UNKNOWN UNQTE. ON 12 FEBRUARY, PATHET LAO RADIO HAD GLOATED OVER THE SHOT-DOWN HELICOPTER BUT I HAD RECEIVED NO REPLY TO MY NOTE OF PROTEST. I THEN READ A FRENCH TRANSCRIPT OF THE BROADCAST TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

2. SOUVANNA SAID THAT HE WAS FAMILIAR WITH THE AFFAIR. THE HELICOPTER HAD GONE DOWN NEAR THE NAM MUM LAKE. HAD IT BEEN FLYING VERY LOW? I SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN RETURNING TO VIENTIANE UNDER A LOW CLOUD COVER. AS
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THE PRIME MINISTER KNEW, THESE FLIGHTS WERE ROUTINE AND

IT WAS A BIT MUCH FOR THE PATHET LAO TO ADD INSULT TO INJURY. THE DEAN CASE AND THE HELICOPTER AFFAIR CAST SERIOUS DOUBTS IN MY MIND OVER PL INTENTIONS AND POLICIES.

3. SOUVANNA ASKED WHETHER I PLANNED TO MAKE ANOTHER PROTEST AND I SAID THAT I HAD A NOTE WITH ME. HE SAID TO SEND IT TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND HE WOULD SEE IT WHEN HE RETURNED TO VIENTIANE NEXT WEEK. A PROTEST THROUGH FONMIN PHOUMI SEEMED TO HIM TO BE THE ONLY THING WE COULD DO. TEXT OF SECOND NOTE TRANSMITTED SEPTTEL.

4. SOUVANNA WAS CLEARLY NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THIS TOPIC AND CHANGED THE SUBJECT QUICKLY TO THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IN VIENTIANE.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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From: VIENTIANE
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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